Chapter IV
AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The idea of autonomy for All India Radio was mooted in 1966 by the Chanda Committee.¹ The committee recommended for the liberalisation of Akashvani from the rigid financial and administrative procedures of the Government. The Janata Government, which came to power in 1977, set up a Committee under Kuldip Nayar to probe into the misuse of the media during the emergency period. Autonomy for the electronic media was an electoral commitment of the Janata Government.² The Verghese Committee, set up in 1977, developed a positive sense of autonomy. It was V.P. Singh as Minister for Information and Broadcasting who gave a conceptual clarity to the media autonomy. The autonomy for All India Radio and Doordarshan through Prasar Bharati Bill was introduced by L.K. Advani, the then Minister for Information and Broadcasting in the Janata Party Government.³ When V.P. Singh became the Prime Minister of the Janata Party Government (National Front) in 1989, the Prasar Bharati Bill was introduced in the Parliament. The twin goals of the Prasar Bharati Bill (1990) were

1. Autonomy of All India Radio and Doordarshan
2. Accountability of All India Radio and Doordarshan

¹ Report of Chanda Committee, 1967, GOI.
³ The Hindu, May 16, 1979.
Autonomy to Akashvani and Doordarshan through Prasar Bharati Act 1977 was a breakthrough in the annals of the Indian Radio and Television Services. The pro-government and bureaucratic functioning of All India Radio and Doordarshan came under scathing attack from the public, press and political parties. The creditability of the All India Radio and Doordarshan as mass media for information and entertainment was lost because of the total control exercised by the government. In spite of the excessive control by the government on TV and radio in India, the monopolistic hegemony of the All India Radio and Doordarshan was collapsed due to the invasion of the private TV channels in India since 1990’s. Even during the 1980’s, there were many or a number of votaries of autonomy of the broadcasting media. The Verghese Committee which was appointed to extend autonomy for the All India Radio and Doordarshan laid emphasis on the following seven facets of autonomy, which are as follows:

1. Substance, not form
2. Monopoly evokes restraint
3. Not a gift
4. Culture of independence

---

6 Star TV, Jan. 1990.
Zee TV, Mar. 1991.
Sun TV.
5. Objective measure, accountability
6. The national environment and
7. Impossibility of absolute autonomy

Based on the above mentioned facets of autonomy, the Prasar Bharati Act and the accountability of All India Radio and Doordarshan are analysed in this chapter. Since 1947 the All India Radio and the Doordarshan since 1959 were under the socialistic phase of political governance and they functioned as monopolistic systems in their respective fields. Therefore, autonomy for the broadcasting media from 1947 to 1985 was inconceivable. But the fact remains that only in a competitive atmosphere the governmental agencies need autonomy. Such a competitive atmosphere for the broadcasting media came as a result of the liberalised economy and a move towards ‘privatization’ in India. The infiltration of the foreign channels like Star TV, CNN and BBC attracted the urban viewers since 1985 and later they produced programmes which were suitable to the Indian needs and culture. Thus, the foundation for the autonomy was laid on account of two important developments in India.

1. Liberalised economy/privatization and
2. Invasion of foreign TV channels in India

Political development since 1989 signifies the absence of absolute majority party governments at the Centre and it introduced the saga of coalition politics in India. In a coalition set up all the coalition partners

---

8 From 1951, the five year plans were based on socialistic principles and India followed a mixed economy, balancing between capitalism and socialism.
must be satisfied and thus the ruling party failed to continue the monopolistic system of All India Radio and Doordarshan. Autonomy to All India Radio and Doordarshan is the outcome of the changed political situation and India's experience with coalition politics. Political manifestos of several national political parties came forward with the promise of autonomy to the broadcasting media. It was carefully analysed by a group of media experts. They held that autonomy was generally conditioned by

1. Introduction of new technology.
3. The general ethics, culture and temperament of the people.

Autonomy for the broadcasting media, which was initiated in 1967 took a policy shape only in 1991. Why autonomy eluded the All India Radio and Doordarshan? The reasons pointed out are as follows:

1. India's primary goal of national integration and mixed economy strategies compelled the Central government to control over the media.

---

2. There has been a lack of political will on the part of the ruling elites.

3. Many national leaders and political parties used the broadcasting media for their own image building exercise.

Politically, Indira Gandhi was totally opposed to the concept of autonomy. Rajiv Gandhi as the Prime Minister felt that India was not ready with autonomous broadcast media. I.K. Gujral as the Prime Minister strongly proposed for internal autonomy of All India Radio and Doordarshan. The Bhagvantam Committee in 1966 had recommended autonomous Corporation for television and radio. During the emergency period from 1975 to 1977, there was a large scale of misuse of the official media as revealed by Enquiry Committee of Emergency excesses.

The Joshi Committee (1984) expressed that autonomy eluded the broadcasting media on two accounts. They are:

"1. TV has to act as an agent of development communication; and
2. It has to work towards national confidence building".

---


Since 1952 the transfer of political power has been peaceful with democratic means. As an alternative to the Congress, there were many coalition political experiments at the Centre. From the political analysis of autonomy for All India Radio and Doordarshan, the researcher observed that when a political party was in power, it wanted to continue the government control over the electronic media, and when it went out of power it wanted autonomy for radio and television.

The analysis shows that fears of cultural imperialism and domination of the Western news organisations resulted in the closure of the broadcasting system. The total control of broadcasting media by the Government was in consonance with India’s socialistic vision. From 1947 to 1990, the Government of India supported

a. Socialism

b. Self-reliance and

c. Import substitution

International trade was closely monitored, as the imports of the foreign goods were severely restricted and the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was severely and strongly regulated. The Narasimha Rao Government (1991) launched a sweeping economic system restricting programme which aimed at loosening trade restrictions. Opening the economic system facilitated the impetus for the liberalisation of the broadcasting system. As the role of the State changes in an open economy, the autonomy increases. The transformation of the country’s political economy had an impact on the broadcasting media. Under an open economy the objectives of mass media
revolve around in extending public service and to increase the commercialised broadcasting system. The Gulf War of 1991 paved the way for foreign TV’s to make an inroad into India. The American CNN through Indian satellite transmitted the news about the Gulf War. The Hong Kong based STAR TV started broadcasting five channels into India using the ASIASAT-I satellite. Between 1996 and 2000 the number of private channels was increased. Commensurating with the advanced technology of communication the Central Governments between 1995 and 2004 had the following broadcasting policies to

1. Support the spread of satellite - distributed services,
2. Provide competitive atmosphere for Doordarshan and All India Radio, and
3. Opened the gateway to commercial broadcasters in partnership with the Doordarshan.

The New Economic Policy of the Central Government in 1991 was globalization and its economic policy\(^\text{19}\) aimed at:

1. To revamp the trade policies
2. Incentives for exports
3. Encouragement for foreign companies to invest in India
4. No restriction on technological transfers.
5. End to ‘license raj’ and less of bureaucratisation
6. To improve international competitiveness of the Indian industry.

\(^{18}\) In December 1995 nearly 13 million households were receiving cable and satellite television channels, making India the largest market for STAR TV.

\(^{19}\) Economic Policy of India, Ministry of Finance, GOI, 1992, p.81.
Between 1991 and 1995, there had been a steady inflow of FDI amounting to $240 million. The role of the public sectors was considerably reduced and the sick PSU’s were sold to private individuals. Economic reforms in India between 1991 and 1995 were judged by the governments’ commitment to the autonomy to broadcasting media. It became the barometer for economic reforms in India. Cultural threats through foreign TV channels were set aside and more economic interest enhanced the autonomy for the All India Radio and Doordarshan. Besides, the government considered that "the Doordarshan and All India Radio are the best marketing tools for the liberalisation of the Indian economy. Only when autonomy granted to Doordarshan and All India Radio, the capitalist interests of liberalised economy can be served. A capitalistic economic structure needs more of advertising and wider process of marketing. These two play a vital part in the maintenance and growth of capitalistic system. Therefore, autonomy to Doordarshan and All India Radio is an outcome of capitalistic economic reforms in India. The spread of commercial broadcasting by foreign TV channels expanded the marketing and advertising infrastructure of the Indian economy. The direction for the autonomy to the Doordarshan and All India Radio emphasised the following two principles.

1. Broadcasting media should function as a vehicle for the success of economic liberalisation, and
2. Programming should build a market for commodities, both cultural and material.\textsuperscript{20}

As per the demand of the liberalised economy, the Doordarshan has undergone the following changes.

1. In 1995, the Doordarshan launched its international channel to telecast the programmes to the West and South Asia.

2. It launched 24 hour satellite distributing movie channel.

3. DD2 has been organised purely as an entertainment channel.

4. Doordarshan started to lease a portion of the channel to private programmers.

5. It telecasted MTV (Western culture) through DD2 since 1994.

6. Doordarshan made use of INSAT-2B and telecasted movies and competed with

   a. STAR TV
   b. ZEE Cinema
   c. HBO and
   d. TNT

7. Since 1990, the Doordarshan began to shift its programming from educational and informational programmes to entertainment programmes as shown in the following Table.

Table 4.1

Component-wise break-up of Regional transmission of major Kendras (During 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kendra</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Entertainment</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ahmedabad</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangalore</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhopal</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhubaneswar</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chennai</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorakhpur</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guwahati</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyderabad</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaipur</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jalandhar</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolkata</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucknow</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumbai</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagpur</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranchi</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thiruvananthapuram</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figures in %*
8. Budgetary support for Doordarshan has been reduced and 70% of Doordarshan's maintenance has been received from commercial advertisement.

9. The commercial mandate of Doordarshan and All India Radio made politician-centered organisation to advertiser-centered outfit.

**Competitive Spirit Needs Autonomy**

In order to compete with the growing number of private channels Doordarshan made use of INSAT-2B transponders. To increase its competitive spirit it entered into cooperative agreements with CNN, BBC and TNT.\(^{21}\) The programming staff of the All India Radio and Doordarshan are sent to Atlanta (USA) for training. Since 1991, the Doordarshan has upgraded its transmitting and broadcasting equipments.

**Regulation and Autonomy**

Broadcasting is a regulated monopoly of the Central Government. The Indian Telegraph Act of 1885 was later amended to vest the exclusive right to "establish, maintain and work" wireless apparatus on the Government of India. Consequently, All India Radio has functioned as an arm of the central government ever since its inception. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is the policy-making body for the entire broadcasting system. Generalist officers drawn from the civil service manage the ministry. The director general heads the All India Radio and

---

\(^{21}\) Times of India, July 5, 1995.
executes policy. The government has held that any member of the elite Indian Administrative Services can function as head of All India Radio with equal disinterest. Hence the director general is a bureaucrat who may or may not be interested or qualified in radio.

National television grew under the umbrella of the All India Radio and in 1976, it was given a separate nomenclature called Doordarshan, literally meaning viewing from a distance. As one would view a deity in a temple, TV audiences regularly gain a glimpse of the political establishment via Doordarshan's news casts. With a mandate similar to radio's, television has also seen remarkable expansion and reached the country in the last three decades. With the rise of privately controlled satellite delivery services, India now has a mixed system of public and private enterprises in television, whereas the radio has remained a government monopoly.

The debate on autonomy for broadcasting has finally resulted in the Parliament passing the Prasar Bharati Act of 1990, which seeks to free radio and television from the direct control of the government and place it in the hands of an autonomous corporation that would be managed by a board. That board would be required under the law to be accountable to a Broadcasting Council and in turn to a statutory Parliamentary Committee with various powers reserved to the government.

Need for Autonomy - All India Radio

All India Radio's bureaucratic ways have been the major impediment to innovation and creativity. In a highly pluralistic society with incredible
linguistic, caste, and class differences, All India Radio has attempted not to offend any group. Controversial social and community welfare issues take a back seat while popular film music dominates. Regional language radio stations beam programmes to the whole state in a formal dialect, which renders it stiff and official. As a consequence, most people find the All India Radio to be boring. Radio, as a mass medium, is particularly suited to communicate in the local dialect and idiom, thereby establishing a personal connection between the broadcaster and the listener. That has not, however, been achieved in India because of the bureaucratic stranglehold on radio.

The model of a centralized national radio service with many regional and local stations intended to achieve the vision of unifying the nation was well intentioned but expensive and difficult to deliver.

**All India Radio Facts at a Glance**

**Broadcasting Centres (213)**

a) Full-fledged Stations
   i) Local Radio Stations 77
   ii) Regional Stations 114

191

b) Relay Centres 14

c) Exclusively VB Centres 3 C

d) Community Radio Stations 5

Total: 213

e) Recording Studios 1 D

f) Transmission Centres for External Services 11 E
g) VB centres excluding exclusive centres 36

Number of Transmitters (335)

a) Medium Wave 143
b) Short Wave 54
c) FM 138

335

Broadcast Coverage

a) By area 91.37%
b) By Population 99.13%

Legend

C. Chandigarh, Kanpur and Vadodra
D. Bhubaneshwar
E. Delhi, Aligarh, Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata, Jalandhar, Rajkot, Bangalore, Gorakhpur, Tuticorin and Panaji

FM Service

Local Radio Stations FM 70
Vividh Bharati FM 25
Metro FM 10
FM 2 Channels (Gold) 04
FM Relay Centres 07
Other FM Transmitters 22

Total: 138

Commercial Service

CBS / VBS Centres 40
Duration in a day 15 Hrs.
Commercial are accepted from 236 Stations - Consisting of 108 Primary Channels, 76 Local Radio Stations, 40 VB Centres and 12 Metro FM (Rate purposes)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language of Broadcast</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Duration per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOME SERVICE</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38 Hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32 Hrs. 45 Mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>70 Hrs. 45 Mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satellite Transmission</td>
<td>1) Asia star</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Afri star</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All India average of the actual listeners</td>
<td>31 Crores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of AIR on any specific day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2

Average Actual Listening of All India Radio Primary Channels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Percent of Radio Homes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For development purpose, more localized micro radio operations based on community and educational institutions would have been more cost efficient and credible with the audiences. The distance between the
programme creators and listeners would have been reduced, which in turn
would have enhanced radio's credibility with the rural masses. Perhaps
radio might then have met local needs better. Until recently, the
government has guarded the frequencies as though they were its property
and has only reluctantly allowed private programme producers some space
on the government controlled stations. This may lead to licensing of private
FM stations that will, in all likelihood, be urban-centered. All India Radio's
local outlets around the country often are criticized for their low levels of
involvement on the part of local groups. Partly in response, the Indian
government began to license private radio stations in 2000, and the first of
them came on air in July 2001. As of 2002 a few community radio stations
had begun to appear.

All India Radio is a completely centralized organisation. Unlike
Doordarshan there is no much competition for All India Radio. The FM
Radio are franchises where time slots are provided on a single channel to
private producers. There has been a tremendous potential for All India
Radio to expand but its market cannot be developed unless its entire power
structures must be decentralised. The existing infrastructure of All India
Radio could play a useful role. The revenue from All India Radio is very
poor. In the year 2003 All India Radio has started "AIR RESOURCES" as
one of its commercial arms to provide consultancy and turnkey solutions in
the field of Radio and TV broadcasting on global basis.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{22} AIR annual Report 2003-04, P 37.
All India Radio has recently taken every step both for expansion of Radio network and to provide qualitative service to the listeners.

Autonomy for All India Radio is meaningful under two conditions:

a. Need for developing international competitive spirit; and
b. Cooperative endeavour with NGO’s to achieve national developmental goals.

More than the All India Radio, the Doordarshan initiated the process for autonomy. Doordarshan had the ability to create popular programmes even during control period. For instance, Hum Log, a drama with a family

---

**Major Programme Activities**

During the period, extensive coverage was given to all conferences, seminars, symposia and film and trade festival of national and international importance in the form of commentaries, radio reports and interviews. Coverage was also given to the visits of foreign dignitaries to India and of the Indian leaders abroad. G-8 Summit, ASEAN Summit, SAARC Foreign Ministers meeting in Nepal, WTO talks at Doha and Cancun, 13th NAM Summit Pakistan Parliamentarians visit to India, Indian Parliamentarians visit to Pakistan, Delhi-Lahore Bus Journey, etc.

GOS (English) and Hindi services were geared to mount wide publicity for the New Economic Policy of liberalisation giving all the details of Government schemes and incentives for the new investment climate in India, specially for the non-resident Indians and multinationals. Urdu, Sindhi and Punjabi services continue to project the image of modern progressive and resurgent India committed to the principles of democracy, socialism, international peace and co-existence.

Computer-based transmission system is under installation at the new broadcasting house. A preliminary database structure of music and spoken word windows was underway for computer-based transmission system.

Audience Research Unit provides guidelines to include the effectiveness of All India Radio programmes and assessment of their impact on target audience besides giving ratings for marketing of programmes.
planning message began in 1984. Serialization of the Ramayana and Mahabharata (1987) created a unique popularity for Doordarshan. The expansion of doordarshan has enhanced its coverage and thereby its commercial activities. The following tables demonstrate the present coverage of the Doordarshan.

### Table 4.3

**Doordarshan Channels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Date of commissioning</th>
<th>Duration of telecast As on Jan.2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DD-1</td>
<td>National and regional segments</td>
<td>15.9.1959</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DD-2</td>
<td>Metro Entertainment Channel</td>
<td>17.9.84/26.1.1993</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>DD-Sports</td>
<td>Sports Channel</td>
<td>18.3.1999</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>DD-Bharati</td>
<td>Enrichment / Cultural Channel</td>
<td>26.1.2002</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>DD-India</td>
<td>International Channel</td>
<td>14.3.1995</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>DD-Gyandarshan</td>
<td>Educational Channel</td>
<td>10.1.2000</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Regional Languages Satellite Channels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Date of commissioning</th>
<th>Duration of telecast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>DD-4</td>
<td>Malayalam</td>
<td>25.10.1993</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>DD-5</td>
<td>Tamil (Podhigai)</td>
<td>15.8.1988</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>DD-6</td>
<td>Oriya</td>
<td>7.9.1991</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>DD-7</td>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>5.11.1991</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>DD-8</td>
<td>Telugu</td>
<td>14.1.1987</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>DD-9</td>
<td>Kannada (Chandana)</td>
<td>1.11.1990</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>DD-10</td>
<td>Marathi (Sahyadri)</td>
<td>9.8.1986</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>DD-11</td>
<td>Gujarati</td>
<td>30.12.1992</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. No.</td>
<td>Channel</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Date of commissioning</td>
<td>Duration of telecast As on Jan.2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>DD-13</td>
<td>Assamese &amp; N.E.</td>
<td>15.3.91/1.5.1993</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>DD-18</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>1993/6.8.1998</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>DD-12</td>
<td>Kashmiri (Kashir)</td>
<td>1993/21.5.1996</td>
<td>24 hrs./day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**State Networks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Date of commissioning</th>
<th>Duration of telecast As on Jan.2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>DD-14</td>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>2.10.1993</td>
<td>24 hrs./week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>DD-15</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>20.11.1994</td>
<td>17 hrs. 30 mts./week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>DD-16</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>2.10.1993</td>
<td>23 hrs./week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>DD-17</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>31.12.1994</td>
<td>17 hrs. 30 mts./week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>DD-19</td>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>6.11.2001</td>
<td>14 hrs./week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>DD-20</td>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>2.4.2002</td>
<td>10 hrs./week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>DD-21</td>
<td>Chattisgarh</td>
<td>20.9.2002</td>
<td>7 hrs. 30 mts./week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>DD-22</td>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>1.11.2002</td>
<td>8 hrs. 45 mts./week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.4**

**Terrestrial Reach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National</th>
<th>All Transmitters in all parts of the country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DD1</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>All Transmitters in the respective State Single Transmitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD2</td>
<td>Metro Network</td>
<td>121 Transmitters in larger town &amp; cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLSC</td>
<td>Regional Service</td>
<td>All transmitters in the respective state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SN</td>
<td>Regional Service</td>
<td>All transmitters in the respective state</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TERRESTRIAL (ONLY) SERVICE**

Local Kendras (at 37 places)
Kashmir Channel (Srinagar)
Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha (Delhi)
There are three major consequences out of the extensive coverage by Doordarshan between 1983-2004. They are:

1. Doordarshan has been used for promoting a national identity.

2. It became the cultural ambassador of India; and

3. It has been closely identified with the ruling party.

Programming between 1980 and 1995 projected an India that was overwhelmingly North Indian, Hindi speaking, middle class and Hindu.\textsuperscript{24} The serialization of the Indian epics Ramayana and Mahabharata had injected the political message of Hindutva ideology among the rural Indian population. The Ram-related imagery had given a pan Indian exposure by Doordarshan. It provided space to forge a sense of Hindu resurgence and unity.\textsuperscript{25} The programme components of Doordarshan even today carried the Indian culture of Hindu majority.

\textsuperscript{24} Amirtha Shah, "Hype, Hyponing and Television in Urban India (Chap 3-6), 1997, p.118-220.

\textsuperscript{25} The Hindu, 27 June, 1997.
Table 4.5

Programme Sourcing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs for different channels of Doordarshan are sourced from:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* In-house production</td>
<td>Programmes produced by Doordarshan professionals utilising Doordarshan infrastructure, including coverage of events 'live' by Doordarshan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Commissioning</td>
<td>Persons of proven merit provided finance to produce programmes required for Doordarshan Privately produced programmes telecast after payment of a fee in exchange for Free Commercial Time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Royalty</td>
<td>Privately produced programmes in ready-to-telecast format accepted for single or multiple telecasts and payment made according to an agreed rate structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Acquired</td>
<td>Programmes acquired from foreign companies or rights of telecast obtained for events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Government Agencies</td>
<td>Educational and Development programmes produced by different agencies of the Government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Feature films are telecast either on royalty basis or on sponsorship)

Table 4.6

Programme Component / Source of DD1 Terrestrial Transmission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>In-house</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sponsored</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Regional Service</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gyandarshan</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Commissioned</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The requirement of all All India Radio and Doordarshan stations to carry the prime-time national programme in Hindi and English added fuel to the fire of linguistic regionalism. In Chennai, there were several demonstrations against the Doordarshan by the regional political party DMK. The control of Doordarshan by the central government shattered the political foundation of India such as secularism, federalism and unity in diversity.

Both the All India Radio and Doordarshan have the following accountabilities from political point of view :-

1. National - integration
2. Safeguarding secularism
3. To preserve the cultural diversities of India

In the understanding of India's unique political problems, the Joshi Committee did not recommend autonomy for Doordarshan. Instead, it focused on the need for the creation of software for development. In the same way the UNESCO - appointed MacBride Commission called for a new international information order to undermine cultural neo-imperialism through the media.26

Functional Freedom

Many persons expressed apprehension to give autonomy to All India Radio and Doordarshan. Nehru was afraid of disorder and pleaded only for

---

functional autonomy. Indra Gandhi prepared a strong state to those emphasizing democratic practice, particularly with regard to electronic media. The National Front Government did not like the idea of autonomy for All India Radio and Doordarshan. These developments indicate that between 1947-1990, the Indian political leaders were reluctant to concede autonomy for All India Radio and Doordarshan.

Between 1947 and 1997, no political initiative had fundamentally altered the administrative and legal infrastructures created under the colonial rule. New communication technologies have sometimes prompted creative innovation in both All India Radio and Doordarshan.

**Promotional Strategy**

- Formation/Constitution of Creative Advisory Committee
- Barter with Newspapers/Magazines
- Better packaging and Presentation
- Use of hoarding
- Use of All India Radio
- Trailers of Sponsored Programmes to be shown in Cinema Halls
- Commissioning J. Walter Thompson and TBW - Anthem, leading advertising agencies for promoting DD1 and DD-Metro Channels.

The issue of autonomy became so wild during 1991 on account of the ever increasing cost of equipments and salaries for its personnel.

There has been failure of accountability by All India Radio according the personality of political leadership. During Indira Gandhi's period All
India Radio and Doordarshan were converted into propaganda machineries of the ruling party. After the death of Indira Gandhi in 1984, Rajiv Gandhi projected a "clean image" and thus the Congress swept the poll. Between 1990-92, the media had been used so blatantly for the election propaganda of the ruling party. Since the establishment of BECIL (25 March 1995) there has been a significant progress in terms of mobilizing resources as shown in the following Table.

Table 4.7

Financial Position of the Past at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Share Capital</td>
<td>36.50</td>
<td>36.50</td>
<td>36.50</td>
<td>136.50</td>
<td>136.50</td>
<td>136.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Share Application Money</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reserves and Surplus</td>
<td>44.32</td>
<td>99.16</td>
<td>167.00</td>
<td>227.89</td>
<td>287.10</td>
<td>359.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Loan funds</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>8.95</td>
<td>265.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Current Liabilities and provisions</td>
<td>116.21</td>
<td>668.93</td>
<td>403.60</td>
<td>757.54</td>
<td>1187.18</td>
<td>883.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>222.03</strong></td>
<td><strong>822.59</strong></td>
<td><strong>718.10</strong></td>
<td><strong>1125.93</strong></td>
<td><strong>1619.73</strong></td>
<td><strong>1645.37</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Autonomy is not just a matter of structure or form. It is essentially a matter of substance. Whatever may be the external form or structure given to any institution, its real character and its relationship with others will depend on factors which are beyond the pale of law and will reflect the real life situations. In setting up the autonomous bodies, which are outside the direct control of the Government Departments, the Government of India has adopted a variety of legal and formal structures. They include
Departmental undertakings of a commercial nature; Companies registered under the Companies Act; Corporations and Commissioner set up under the Acts of Parliament; and the societies registered under the Societies Act. The 120 public sector companies fall within these categories. The Railways, Posts and Telegraph and Ordnance Factories are essentially commercial undertakings run departmentally, their employees being Government services. Organisations like the STC, HMT and Indian Telephone Industries are registered as companies under the Indian Companies Act. The ONGC, LIC and the Airlines companies are specifically set up under the Acts of Parliament. Leaving aside the Departmental Undertakings which constitute a part and parcel of the Government, there is in practice very little distinction between companies registered under the Companies Act and the Corporations and Commission setup under the Parliamentary Statute. The degree of autonomy has not been solely dependent upon these formal structures, but from quite other factors. In both the cases, Parliamentary control continues to be exercised. Questions are put in the parliament and Ministers are responsible to answer them. The Comptroller and Auditor-General has a say. Courts of law make pronouncements and autonomy is consequently circumscribed.

Autonomy cannot be conferred, but it must be earned by the concerned organisations. Autonomy will largely depend on how well it is maintained to what extent it satisfies its consumers, the excellence of its programmes and how objective and fair it is in the news and current affairs programming. Its ability to remain autonomous and to prevent constant intervention by outside authorities will largely depend upon itself.
Autonomy is not merely a two-way relationship between one institution and another. The concept involves the very management of the institution itself. There is a facile assumption that autonomy is some kind of declaration of independence from an outside body which may seek to intervene. Thus the autonomy of the broadcasting system is being viewed largely as autonomy vis-a-vis Government. It was found during the course of evidence that there were other parameters of autonomy which were being claimed. Station Directors wanted to have greater autonomy vis-a-vis Akashvani headquarters. Individual producers and technicians demanded creative autonomy and a greater say in the formulation of policy. The concept of autonomy, therefore, must be comprehensive. It will involve a highly participative and decentralised style of management and the fostering of a culture of independence among individuals as well as units.

**Accountability and Autonomy**

Autonomy is not an absolute concept. It is inextricably tied with the related concept of accountability. Whenever one uses a word like autonomy, one must ask at once, "autonomy from whom" and "autonomy for what". Quite evidently, autonomy is sought from the authority which creates the organisation, that is from the Government itself. But the guarantee of such autonomy presupposes that there is an absolutely clear conception of what is required to be done in terms of an agreed set of objectives. Given such a set of objectives, autonomy can easily be conceded if it is coupled with the concept of accountability. Autonomy then takes on a real meaning precisely because it is not absolute, does not become arbitrary, and cannot be
manipulated to suit the whims and fancies of the individuals. Autonomy is needed for the attainment of the predetermined objectives which can be evaluated by an external authority and made subject to a system of accountability.

It is necessary, therefore, that there shall be a well-defined set of objectives and that the evolution of a system of accountability be encouraged. While it is generally accepted that accountability must be to an authority like Parliament, there are many other interests in a democratic system which should not be ignored. True accountability would mean answerability to all these opinion makers and interests and we will therefore have to seek forums other than the Parliament alone which might represent a cross-section of public life and the community.

The accountability matching for both the All India Radio and Doordarshan is very weak and ineffective.

The operation of autonomy is conditioned by the overall national environment. The social, political, legal and economic factors are important for consideration while granting autonomy for All India Radio and Doordarshan.

Absolute autonomy is not conceivable in the context of the nation's unique social, political and economic problems. Even a private sector's autonomy has been influenced by national and international policies/developments.
Autonomy for All India Radio and Doordarshan is designed to increase pluralism and diversity. In the same way, it can bring a new order to the new technological environment. There are opportunities for non-licensed satellite broadcasting services to be carried.

It is true that any analysis about autonomy for the broadcasting media must be responsive to the particular complexities of the Indian broadcasting landscape, linguistic needs, and the system of national and regional broadcasting and its relationship to the political system.

Autonomy for All India Radio and Doordarshan must operate in accordance with the following background objectives:

a) Preserving the national identity and giving direction and shape to the national vision;

b) Encouraging the local and regional aspirations and needs;

c) Assuring the plurality of news and views;

d) Recognizing and fulfilling the need for private broadcasting;

e) Sustaining and developing voices and production talent that can compete effectively in a global marketplace of programming;

f) Avoiding monopolies in broadcast ownership and sources of information; and

g) Making efficient uses of the airwaves in the public interest.
In addition, there are objectives not so frequently articulated in India as in the West, but nonetheless recognized as necessary consequences of broadcasting reforms:

a) Expanding the economy,

b) Enhancing the information infrastructure through job creation and new business development; and

c) Increasing the consumer choice.

Autonomy for All India Radio and Doordarshan may enhance the democratic participation of the mass media which are now run by both the private and public sectors. But it is the only institution that could provide information required by all sections of society and ensure the people's direct participation in a democracy. When there was a need to reflect the people's voices and ensure that they received full information, an institution independent of private and public sector influence was essential.

The autonomous media would be well run by a board comprising persons representing all interests of society. Its personnel should be selected by a committee unaffiliated to government or any business house.

If the government wants to propagate its news, it could hire and operate some channels. The rest of the channels and media outlets should be run by the independent body.

The media is subject to different pressures and profit could not be the only consideration to run a media outlet. Its raison d'être was information
dissemination. There was a proliferation of media outlets with different motivations at different levels. However, it was an institution to be nurtured in a democracy. On the issue of media monopoly, a media organisation needs huge resources and only some wealthy individuals could run the media empires, controlling almost the entire flow of information. But a monopoly has to be broken for more democratisation of the media. Democracy required that the people receive what they actually need.